

U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced today the sentencing of Crustantation McRae, age 34, of Atlanta, Georgia, to 413 months imprisonment by United States District Judge Jerome B. Friedman in United States District Court in Norfolk, for conspiring to obstruct commerce by robbery and to launder money and using a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence. Additionally, McRae was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,655,767.50 to Zales Jewelry Stores; \$424,649.69 to Veri-Claim; \$400,413.00 to Sterling/Kay Jewelers; \$1,205,351.65 to Friedmans Jewelers and \$1,800.00 to Pawn Mart Inc.

On November 30, 2004, McRae pled guilty to the three federal offenses. McRae participated in fourteen jewelry store robberies along Mid-Atlantic states, including the November 27, 2001, armed robbery of the Zales jewelry store in the Prime Outlets in Williamsburg, Virginia, where approximately \$986,573 in jewelry and \$700 in cash were taken from July 31, 2001, through May 14, 2003. McRae and several other individuals, including Seneca Colbert, Tauheed Shakir, Bryan D. Kelly, Troy Anthony Sherrell and Perren Terrell Brewer, robbed a total of 17 jewelry stores, many of them located in outlet malls, and one pawn shop, along the eastern states of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee.

The defendants entered the stores brandishing handguns and demanded jewelry, cash and the store's video security tapes from the employees. In many instances, employees were locked inside storage rooms. The robbers always made quick getaways by emptying the display cases and carrying the contents inside shopping bags. Three of the robberies took place in the Eastern District of Virginia, where, in addition to the Williamsburg robbery, Leesburg's Prime Outlets Zales store was robbed twice in January 2002. The aggregate approximate value of the jewelry and cash taken is \$6,671,251.40.

Defendants Troy Anthony Sherrell and Perren Terrell Brewer are awaiting sentencing. Seneca Colbert was sentenced on August 9, 2004, to 324 months imprisonment. Tauheed Shakir was sentenced on February 28, 2005, to 228 months imprisonment and Bryan D. Kelly was sentenced on January 18, 2005, to 204 months imprisonment.

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The large-scale, multi-state and multi-jurisdictional investigation was conducted by agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and numerous other local police and sheriffs departments.

Assistant United States Attorney Howard J. Zlotnick prosecuted the case for the United States.

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